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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF
OUTER SPACE
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Working Group on the Use of Nuclear
Power Sources in Outer Space

DRAFT REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE USE OF NUCLEAR POWER SOURCES IN OUTER SPACE ON THE WORK OF ITS NINTH SESSION

1. The Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space, reconvened in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/45 of 9 December 1991, paragraph 11, held its ninth session at United Nations Headquarters from 27 February to 4 March 1992 under the chairmanship of Mr. J. H. Carver (Australia), during the twenty-ninth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

2. Following an exchange of views, the Working Group adopted the present report at its meeting on ___ March 1992.

3. The Working Group noted that, on the basis of the work of its eighth session, in 1990, the Legal Subcommittee's Working Group on the question had agreed on a text for draft principle 3 relating to guidelines and criteria for safe use (A/AC.105/457, annex I, para. 12).

4. The Working Group noted that the scientific and technical guidelines and criteria for the safe use of nuclear-power sources in outer space could, in the future, be reviewed and revised as necessary, as provided in draft principle 12 of the draft principles contained in document A/AC.105/C.2/L.154/Rev.10.

5. The view was expressed that the language of draft principle 3 should be clarified, as indicated in order to prevent possible misinterpretation of certain of its provisions, identified in the working paper A/AC.105/C.2/L.185, which was submitted to the Legal Subcommittee at its thirtieth session, in 1991. It was believed that the changes in the language of draft principle 3 proposed in the working paper would meet those concerns. Other delegations

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expressed the view that draft principle 3 had been agreed by consensus and should not be reopened. Some delegations expressed the view that concerns regarding the scope of applicability of the draft principles should be addressed in the overall preamble to the principles.

6. The Working Group heard a presentation on the United States space nuclear-power programme, including the use of radioisotope thermoelectric generators on lunar and planetary probes, research on space nuclear reactor systems for lunar and Martian bases, and studies of nuclear propulsion systems for use outside the atmosphere.

7. The Working Group discussed a working paper submitted by Australia, Canada, France, Germany, India, Turkey and the United Kingdom (A/AC.105/C.1/WG.5/L.29) containing a draft text for a preamble to the set of principles, which is annexed to the present report. The Working Group agreed that the working paper provided a useful basis for discussions and might be considered further at the next session of the Legal Subcommittee.